

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are in the application and stand rejected.

Claims 1, 2, 10 and 17 are amended to clarify that the novel device comprises a digital camera with its own camera lens and a corrective lens that supplements the function of the camera lens. Support for these amendments is found on page 4, lines 11, and lines 21-22. These amendments should obviate the section 112 objections.

Claims 1 and 13 are also amended to incorporate the limitations of former claim 3 which is canceled.

No new matter has been added by the amendments.

Claims 1, 4, 7, 8 and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Steinberg et al. US 6,433,818 ("Steinberg"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 calls for a novel electronic apparatus with a fingerprint reading unit. The fingerprint reading unit has a stamping area where the operator contacts a finger to provide a fingerprint for authentication. Refer to Fig. 2 and claim 13. To obtain improved resolution of the fingerprint image, the stamping area comprises a semi-transparent film. See the specification paragraph bridging pages 6 and 7.

Steinberg relates to a digital camera that includes a biometric security device. The security device limits access to the digital camera functions if the biometric feature of the camera user does not match biometric features pre-registered in the camera's database. The biometric security device of Steinberg can be positioned in the view finder and/or shutter control button of the digital camera. This conveniently facilitates obtaining the biometric features of the camera user because the act of photographing a subject typically requires

placing the iris of the eye close to the view finder lens and placing a finger on the control button.

Paragraph 17 of the Office Action properly concludes that Steinberg does not teach a stamping area comprising a semi-transparent film. The novelty rejection of claims 1, 4, 7, 8 and 13-14 is thus obviated. However, office action paragraphs 15-18 further maintain that Ball et al., US 6,368,483 ("Ball") teaches use of a semi-transparent film to resist marking by fingerprints. Therefore the Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious for Steinberg to incorporate into the stamping area a mark-resistant, semi-transparent film motivated by the desire to read fingerprints efficiently multiple times.

Applicant disagrees because Ball does not teach mark-resistance of semi-transparent film. Ball relates to aluminum foil having an anodic oxide film thereon. The anodic oxide film has different thicknesses from location to location on the foil surface such that light reflectance from the film creates visible interference contrast effects. Providing a semi-transparent reflective layer such as by sputtering aluminum or other metal onto the anodic oxide film (col. 3, lines 42-59) is one of several ways taught to increase the interference color intensity (lines 29-31).

As to fingerprint marking resistance, Ball recites at col. 3, lines 60-65:

Aluminum foil may carry a silicone or waxy organic film overlying the anodic oxide film or the semi transparent reflective layer. Such a film may assist feeding the film into machinery or may resist marking for example by fingerprints.

That is, Ball teaches that silicone or waxy organic film imparts fingerprint marking resistance to the composite. The reference does not state that semi-transparent film renders the

surface fingerprint marking-resistant. To the contrary, the quoted passage implies that a semi-transparent reflective layer is not intrinsically resistant to fingerprint marking because an overlying silicone or waxy organic film is suggested to protect the semi-transparent layer from fingerprint marking. Moreover, one might reasonably infer from Ball's suggestion to apply a silicone or waxy organic film that a semi-transparent film promotes fingerprint marking. Ball thus constitutes a teaching away from using a semi-transparent film in the stamping area of a fingerprint reading unit.

Claims 1 and 13 call for the stamping area of the fingerprint reading unit to include a semi-transparent film. Steinberg does not disclose a fingerprint reading unit with a semi-transparent film. Ball discloses a semi-transparent film only as a way to increase interference color intensity of an aluminum foil surface. It does not teach that a semi-transparent film resists fingerprint marking. Accordingly, Ball provides no motivation to combine a semi-transparent film with the apparatus of Steinberg. In holding an invention obvious in view of a combination of references, there must be some suggestion, motivation, or teaching in the prior art that would have led a person of ordinary skill in the art to select the references and combine them in the way that would produce the claimed invention. Absent motivation claims 1 and 13 would not have been obvious over Steinberg in view of Ball, and applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejection to these claims be withdrawn.

Claims 4, 7, 8 and 14 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 or 13. These dependent claims recite further limitations and are also currently patentable due to that dependency. The other pending claims, namely, claims 2, 5, 6,

9-12 and 15-17, also depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 or 13. The Office Action cites certain additional references in its finding that these other claims would have been obvious. Applicant submits that none of the additional references suggest that the fingerprint reading unit stamping area of Steinberg should comprise a semi-transparent film. Therefore despite the additional references the subject matter of the other claims should also be patentable by dependency from claims 1 and 13. Hence, applicant believes that it is unnecessary now to address the Examiner's specific grounds of rejection of the dependent claims but reserves right to address such grounds should that become necessary.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the pending claims are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the cited art and respectfully requests that claims 1, 2 and 4-17, be allowed at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey C. Lew', is written over the typed name and title.

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